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SENATE. NEW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE
ON ADDITIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS
FOR THE LIBRARY.

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55TH CONGRESS, }
1st Session. }

SENATE.

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NEW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON ADDITIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS
FOR THE LIBRARY,

TO ACCOMPANY THE

MEMORIAL OF MESSRS. SMITHMEYER AND PELZ.



WASHINGTON:
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.
1897.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN LIBRARIES



NEW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

MAY 4, 1897.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. MORRILL, from the Committee on Additional Accommodations for the Library, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany the memorial of Messrs. Smithmeyer and Pelz.]

The completion of the new Library of Congress, now generally conceded to be creditable to those connected with its design and construction, unfortunately brings these parties into some unnecessary antagonism as to the just and proper distribution of credit due to the architects and engineers who have had, first and last, for more than ten years, this great work on their hands.

The memorial of Messrs. Smithmeyer & Pelz, the authors of the original plan of the Library, introduced January 25, 1897 (Doc. 88, Fifty-fourth Congress, second session), having been referred to the Committee on Additional Accommodations for the Library of Congress, the undersigned, being all of the existing members of the committee, have examined the legislation of Congress on the subject, and having also asked the parties against whom some of the reflections of the aforesaid memorial were applied to make such answer as the facts would support, now submit the following report:

In 1886 the general plan for the Library by the architect, John L. Smithmeyer, was accepted by Congress, and work by him was commenced on the Library at a salary of \$5,000 per annum, Mr. Pelz, the junior partner, being employed at a salary of \$3,000.

In 1888 Congress became dissatisfied and repealed the law by which the plan of Mr. Smithmeyer had been accepted, and, indirectly, discharged him from service. Gen. Thomas L. Casey, Engineer in Chief of the Army, by the same act, was put in charge of the work in the following terms: That—

general plans for the entire construction thereof shall be prepared by or under the direction of the Chief of Engineers of the Army, which plans shall be subject to the inspection and approval of the Secretary of War and of the Secretary of the Interior.

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An appropriation of \$500,000 was made for the building for the Library of Congress, "including the cost of all professional and other personal services that the Chief of Engineers of the Army may deem necessary for the work and shall specially order." It was further provided that the value of the plan which had been submitted by Mr. Smithmeyer might be adjusted and determined by the Secretary of the Interior and paid. This not having been so adjusted, the claim was prosecuted in the courts, where Mr. Smithmeyer recovered \$48,000.

It thus appears that Congress directed not only that a new plan should be prepared, but that the old one should be paid for. New plans were prepared accordingly, under the direction of General Casey, and submitted by him to Congress in 1889, one estimated to cost \$4,000,000 and one estimated at \$6,000,000. The latter was finally adopted by Congress with the cost limited to \$6,000,000, not including \$500,000 previously appropriated and partly expended, with the provision that "no changes or modifications shall be made that will increase the cost above the limitation herein prescribed."

The high reputation of General Casey, Engineer in Chief of the Army, was known when he was selected to take charge of the completion of so important a building as that of the State, War, and Navy Department, and then of the Washington Monument. Upon these large structures, requiring years of labor, General Casey had as his chief and practical assistant Mr. Bernard R. Green, who has been in the same responsible position in the construction of the Library of Congress. Mr. Pelz was retained in employment by General Casey until April, 1892.

From November, 1892, to March, 1897, General Casey employed his son, Edward Pearce Casey, as an architect, who, although comparatively a young man, was not without some experience, and had received, at home and abroad, an education for his profession longer in years and perhaps more thorough than generally falls to the lot of our architects. His time appears to have been mainly devoted to the interior of the Library, and the extent and character of his work would seem to justify his employment by his father and is likely to be approved by his countrymen.

That John L. Smithmeyer was an architect of much merit was demonstrated more than twenty years ago when he secured, in competition with a considerable number of architects of the country, the premium offered by Congress of \$1,500 for his plan of the Library of Congress. Years after a majority of the Committee on Additional Accommodations for the Library of Congress reposed great confidence in Mr. Smithmeyer and obtained an appropriation for a portion of his expenses in visiting several foreign libraries, where, no doubt, some valuable information was secured as to their construction. The large award of the courts that the Government should pay for the plan which Congress once accepted and then refused by providing another and different

~~Dr. G. L. Wire~~
Dr. G. L. Wire

Building

was the value of the plan of Mr. Smithmeyer as estimated by the courts.

It appears to us that there is sufficient honor for the author of the design of the Library of Congress, as well as for those who were subsequently authorized to prepare other plans, and also to take full charge of its construction. It has not been denied that the plan of the building has been based on that of Mr. Smithmeyer, but few changes of the exterior, while the changes of the interior are greater in number as well as in importance.

There is no great difficulty in ascertaining to whom credit is due for the design of the Library. The drawings by which the work of the building has been constructed will in every case identify and disclose the origin of the plans, and comparisons of these with some of the original plans will show differences, some of which will be found in the subsequent report, together with photographs showing several changes

General Casey did not live to see the completion of the building, which was completed March 25, 1896; but he lived until he knew that the building was completed as early as had been promised, and at a cost which was fixed eight years ago by Congress.

The report with the statement, marked "A," of actual cost of the building, by Mr. Green, who has had such close relations with the building, together with the statement heretofore referred to of Benjamin K. Green, marked "B," and the statement of Edward Pearce Casey, marked "C."

JUSTIN S. MORRILL.

W. B. ALLISON.

S. M. CULLOM.

A.

The amount remaining on March 4, 1897, of the money actually appropriated for the Library building was \$149,532.29. Of this amount, \$64,117.63 was required for the completion of work unfinished at that date, leaving a balance of appropriation of \$85,414.66. The total limit of cost fixed by law March 2, 1889, was \$6,500,000, of which \$254,432.06 had been already expended by the Commission in charge of the building before General Casey's time, leaving a total limit of cost for the work to be executed under his charge of \$6,245,567.94. The actual cost on this latter limit was \$6,090,153.28, being a saving of \$155,414.66 on the original limit fixed by law.

To this amount should be added the following amounts, namely: Cost of the tunnel and book-carrying apparatus between the Library and the Capitol, subsequently provided for by law, to be included in the original cost of the building, \$25,049.23. Auction sales of refuse

materials, etc., charged against the appropriation by the rulings of the Treasury Department, \$6,891.47, and for wages paid to workmen for legal holidays according to law for services not rendered to the construction of the building, \$26,088.04, making in all a sum of \$213,443.40 not used out of the original limit fixed by law in the actual construction of the building.

These are the figures which will appear in the detailed report of cost of the building, which I am now preparing to hand in to Congress as the final report of the construction of the building, giving its exact total cost to a cent.

BERNARD R. GREEN, *Superintendent.*

B.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *March 17, 1897.*

In response to your request for the facts concerning the memorial of John L. Smithmeyer and Paul J. Pelz, comprising Senate Doc. No. 88, Fifty-fourth Congress, second session, introduced in the Senate January 25, 1897, and referred to the Committee on Additional Accommodations for the Library of Congress, and also the animadversions of Senator Vest upon me on the floor of the Senate March 3, 1897, I have the honor to make the following statement:

First, as to the memorial. This is a claim that the memorialists "are the architects and the only architects" of the new building for the Library of Congress, and as such "all the credit which may attach to the architectural work is exclusively our (their) own." They complain "that since the superintendence of the construction was taken from us (them) there has been a persistent and insidious effort on the part of those in charge of the work to cloud, confuse, obscure, belittle, and so take from us (them) also our (their) rights as such architects," and that the placing of the name of Edward Pearce Casey as one of the architects on a tablet is unjustifiable.

The laws under which the building has been finally constructed are as follows:

Statutes at Large, volume 25, page 523: "For the building for the Library of Congress, as herein provided for, and for each and every purpose connected therewith, including the cost of all professional and other personal services that the Chief of Engineers of the Army may deem necessary for the work, and shall specially order, five hundred thousand dollars.

"This appropriation, and all appropriations hereafter made, and all sums available from appropriations heretofore made for this purpose, shall be expended under the direction and supervision of the Chief of Engineers of the Army, who shall have the control and management of all of said work, and the employment of all persons connected therewith. And all contracts for the construction of said building, or any

part thereof, shall be made by the Chief of Engineers of the Army, and so much of the act entitled 'An act authorizing the construction of a building for the accommodation of the Congressional Library,' approved April fifteenth, eighteen hundred and eighty-six, as requires the construction of said building substantially according to the plan submitted to the Joint Select Committee on Additional Accommodations for the Library of Congress, by John L. Smithmeyer, and so much of the first section as provides for a commission, together with the eighth section of said act, be and the same are hereby repealed, and the duties of said commission under said act are hereby devolved upon the Chief of Engineers of the Army, who shall annually report to Congress at the commencement of each session a detailed statement of all the proceedings under the provisions of this act, and hereafter until otherwise ordered by Congress no work shall be done in the construction of said Library except such as is herein provided for, and all contracts for work or materials not necessary for the execution of the work contemplated herein are hereby rescinded. And all loss or damage occasioned thereby or arising under said contracts, together with the value of the plan for a Library building submitted to the Joint Select Committee on Additional Accommodations for the Library of Congress by John L. Smithmeyer, in the Italian renaissance style of architecture, may be adjusted and determined by the Secretary of the Interior, to be paid out of the sums heretofore or hereby appropriated: *Provided*, That before any further contracts are let for the construction of said building, general plans for the entire construction thereof shall be prepared by or under the direction of the Chief of Engineers of the Army, which plans shall be subject to the inspection and approval of the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Interior: *And provided further*, That the total cost of said building shall not exceed four million dollars, exclusive of appropriations heretofore made." (Approved October 2, 1888.)

Statutes at Large, volume 25, page 966: "For the building for the Library of Congress, as authorized by the sundry civil appropriation act approved October second, eighteen hundred and eighty-eight, except as herein modified, and for each and every purpose connected therewith, five hundred thousand dollars. And said building shall be constructed in accordance with the plans marked "D," submitted by the Chief of Engineers with his annual report to Congress, being Miscellaneous Document Numbered Twelve, Fiftieth Congress, second session, and at a total cost therefor not exceeding five million five hundred thousand dollars exclusive of appropriations heretofore made, and no changes or modifications shall be made that will increase the cost above the limitation herein prescribed: *Provided*, That contracts may be entered into for all the stone required for the exterior walls of said building to be paid for as appropriations may from time to time be made by law." (Approved, March 2, 1889.)

Statutes at Large, volume 29, page 470: "That Bernard R. Green be, and is hereby, authorized and directed to assume and exercise all of

the duties and powers heretofore conferred by law upon the late Brigadier-General Thomas L. Casey in relation to the construction and completion of the Library of Congress." * * * (Approved, April 2, 1896.)

Under these laws the construction of the whole building, from foundation to completion, including the preparation of all designs and drawings of every description, has been conducted solely by the late General Casey and myself. I was his immediate and only executive officer, and as such had the superintendence and direction of every detail of the work until his death, when to my previous duties was added the responsibility of the general charge under Congress. Not only this; I laid the first half of the foundation of the building, under the Commission which had charge of the work in 1888—and quite independent of Mr. Smithmeyer, the architect at that time—before it was placed by law in the hands of General Casey, on October 2 of that year. This is all that had been accomplished toward actual construction at that date, and Mr. Smithmeyer has had nothing whatever to do with the building since.

Mr. Pelz was then employed by me under the title of architect upon specific orders of General Casey to me, made upon my recommendation and Mr. Pelz's earnest solicitation. He was never appointed by letter, and his function was only that of designer of the artistic features of the work under my personal direction, while I designed the actual construction and the great book stacks, selected all of the materials, and prepared every specification. The exterior architectural features of the building as a whole and the fundamental composition of the stair hall and main rotunda in the interior are, however, chiefly the work of Mr. Pelz, under the above conditions.

Substantially these facts are stated on pages 7 and 8 of my annual report of December 7, 1896 (Senate Doc. No. 20, Fifty-fourth Congress, second session), to which so much exception is taken in the memorial.

One of the chief items of complaint is that I stated in that report that "none of the plans, drawings, or designs made prior to General Casey's charge of the work had been used, all being new and different."

This is literally true except as stated in the previous page of the report, that the prior designs had been used as a basis for the new one.

The building as built could not have been erected upon any of the previous plans, drawings, or designs, because it is more or less different in every part—in many parts very different and in others radically different. At the same time its architectural outline and complexion is similar to and evidently based on the previous plan and design as stated. The accompanying exhibits illustrate this sufficiently to show that "new and different" drawings must have been made for the entire structure since General Casey took charge of it. Plates 1, 3, 5, and 7 of these exhibits show, respectively, the plan, perspective elevation, perspective of the staircase hall, and model of the main rotunda in use for the structure prior to General Casey's charge of it, October 2, 1888, and plates 2, 4, 6,

and 8, show, respectively, the corresponding plan and views of the building as actually constructed. A variety of other illustrations of the differences between the old and new drawings can be seen at the office of the building, and furnished if required. The law authorized changes and modifications within the fixed limit of total cost, and they were accordingly introduced, as the working plans were developed, whenever a manifest improvement could thus be secured. Many opportunities of this sort appeared and were taken advantage of as the construction of the building proceeded.

Notwithstanding all that is quoted and argued in the memorial in reference to the plans adopted by the original act of 1886, and the findings of the Court of Claims, the fact is that since General Casey took charge of the work the office has been in possession of no drawing, nor have I ever seen or known of one which bore any mark or inscription by which it might be identified as the plan, or as one of the sheets relating to "the plan" adopted by that act. General Casey had to rely on the statement of Mr. Pelz for the truth of the inscription "Adopted by act of Congress, approved April 15, 1886," which was placed upon Sheets D No. I, D No. IV, D No. VII, D No. VIII, and E, which accompanied his original report and project December 1, 1888 (House Mis. Doc. No. 12, Fiftieth Congress, second session).

Later examination of the subject has convinced me that Mr. Pelz's statement was incorrect, and that the drawings in question embodied considerable modifications of the original. Indeed, the memorialists themselves state that they "elaborated" their plan after it had been adopted by the law. By comparison with the reproductions of the adopted plans published in the Washington Evening Star of April 10, 1886, just before the law was approved by the President (April 15), the particular plans among those in possession of the office of the building adopted by that law may be readily identified, and the "elaboration" made by the architects seen to be of some magnitude.

In reference to the paragraph on page 8 of the memorial, which states that the law "was mandatory that our (their) plan should be used," and that I, "being an engineer and not an architect," am "unfamiliar with the ethics of our (their) profession." It is a fact that the law makes no reference to their plans, and I may state that I have been steadily engaged in the study and erection of large and important buildings for twenty years, practically at the head of the works, not to mention a considerable previous acquaintance with everything pertaining to building for many years. I have been most actively engaged in this business without cessation throughout my whole adult life of thirty-three years. This has given me, perhaps, some knowledge of architecture and of architects, although I have never claimed membership in that noble profession nor the authorship of any architectural design.

The next subject of complaint is that the name of Edward Pearce Casey appears on the memorial tablet as one of the architects of the

building. Like many of the statements in the memorial, that in reference to the "deep line of demarcation," putting the names of the architects below and separate from those of the engineers, is quite incorrect, for my name is included with theirs below the line.

The argument presented is that because General Casey stated in the letter of dismissal of Mr. Pelz that he had entirely completed the designs of the building, both interior and exterior, there was nothing left for a succeeding architect to do.

The letter referred to is in full as follows:

WASHINGTON, D. C., *March 29, 1892.*

DEAR SIR: As you have now entirely completed the designs of the architectural characteristics and features of the building for the Library of Congress, both of the exterior and interior, for which your services have been exclusively employed during the past three and a half years, I have to state that your services will no longer be required by the Government upon the building.

I have therefore to inform you that your employment and salary will be discontinued after the 1st day of May next, and I am pleased to grant you a leave of absence from the 1st of April to that time.

In this connection allow me to thank you for the assistance you have rendered in the artistic and esthetic branch of the general design of the building, and to congratulate you on the permanent result to which you may always refer with pride.

Very respectfully, yours,

THOS. LINCOLN CASEY,

Chief of Engineers, United States Army.

Mr. PAUL J. PELZ,

Architect, Washington, D. C.

The facts are these. Although Mr. Pelz had made designs for the principal interior spaces, all were rejected because crude and labored and not deemed worthy of execution. Consequently none of them were used, except as to the main lay out of the marble work in the stair hall and rotunda, as stated above and mentioned in my annual report. He was employed for three and a half years after General Casey took charge, and had nothing else to do but to work on the purely architectural and esthetic features of the structure, in which he was given every possible freedom and the assistance of able draftsmen. Yet this period, succeeding the "enormous study of the problem extending over thirteen years" (see memorial, p. 2), had not brought him to definite conclusions for the designs of the interior of the building. General Casey's letter meant that the designs were evidently as complete as Mr. Pelz could make them. The exterior design was easier to work up with the assistance of the draftsmen referred to, and there was less unnecessary delay on that part of the work. The interior architecture, however, was a more complicated problem, and the General finally concluded, with as little prejudice as possible to Mr. Pelz, to dismiss him with the kindly letter above quoted.

This occurred in the spring of 1892 when the walls of the building were but little more than halfway up, and it became necessary to seek other architectural assistance. Six months later Mr. Casey, upon whom the memorialists seek to cast obloquy, was set to work as architect. They say that "the work done by this young gentleman was in connection with the painting and other decoration of the interior—he was a sort of manager of decoration." Neither of them has the slightest acquaintance with him nor knows of whom he speaks. A full third of a century has passed over his head, and he is not so young and "immature" as they would have it appear to persons who have not seen his work for themselves. To others no defense is necessary. A born artist of rare talent, which was strongly marked throughout boyhood; grandson of the late Robert W. Weir, professor of art at the United States Military Academy; a graduate of the School of Mines, Columbia University, at the head of his class, and a leading graduate in architecture in the same university; two years with McKim, Mead & White, the noted architects in New York City; and three years in Europe, taking a large number of the prizes at L'Ecole des Beaux Arts, in Paris, and traveling extensively throughout all the countries surrounding the Mediterranean, studying their architecture and art, he could hardly have been considered a fledgling when he began work on the Library building. His achievements there now prove that he was not. His ability was clearly perceived by General Casey and myself, as well as by his professional associates in New York, at the outset, and he was employed accordingly.

About that time he entered the advertised competition for designs for the new city hall to occupy the present City Hall Square in New York, and to cost eight or ten millions of dollars. Of the 134 competitors among the architects entering, incognito, his design was adjudged by the board of expert architects to be one of the best six to receive the prizes, and as to the ground plan the very best.

His function at the Library building was strictly in the field of architecture, not painting and sculpture alone, but architecture of the highest order. To take the problems left by his predecessor and redesign and bring out of them the grace and beauty visible on all hands in the building to-day, as Mr. Casey has done, was the work of nothing less than a master hand. The interior architecture of a building is no less important than its exterior architecture, and there are many notable instances on record of a succession of architects having to do with the design of the same important building. Decoration of buildings is strictly architecture, and the competent architect designs and superintends the execution of it.

While Mr. Casey acted as architectural adviser in all matters throughout the last half of the construction, he specially designed the whole interior of the great dome down to the gallery balustrade and improved the marble work below it, the upper portion of the stair hall and entrance vestibule, the two Congressional reading rooms, the

Librarian's office, the four corner pavilions, and the two west exhibition halls in the second story, and all but the marble and ironwork in the two first-story corridors. He also designed all mosaic and tile floors and mosaic vaultings, and the vault decorations everywhere, and supervised intimately the painting and sculptural work of both interior and exterior. He also made the design for the architectural work in bronze and wrought iron.

As to the action of the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects on this subject quoted in the memorial, it was taken by a small number of the few members comprising the chapter, upon misrepresentations of the facts. An effort was immediately made to have that action ratified by the institute itself at a meeting in New York, and also by the Architectural League there. The following letters show what befell the effort as soon as the truth was learned.

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS,

Providence, March 9, 1897.

DEAR SIR: At a meeting of the board of directors of the American Institute of Architects the report of the Washington chapter in regard to the authorship of the design of the Congressional Library building was referred to a committee consisting of Messrs. Robert D. Andrews and W. S. Dames, which committee made the following report as copied from the minutes of the meeting of the executive committee of the board of directors of the American Institute of Architects held in New York, May 25, 1896:

"Mr. Andrews, for the committee to investigate as to the authorship of the design of the Congressional Library, reported that they had investigated the matter referred to them, that Mr. Casey had written a communication to Harper's Weekly, which had been published by it, explaining his professional connection with the building, but followed by an editorial statement that what had been published was authorized by Mr. Casey, which, however, was not true as to the title of the article, which gave his name as that of the architect of the building, as he had not seen and did not authorize said title.

"It was thought to be useless to follow the matter further with Harper's Weekly, and after a correspondence with Mr. Stead, president of the Washington chapter, it was considered by him, as well as by the committee, best to drop it.

"The president stated that the matter had, by the Architectural League, been referred to Mr. Bruce Price, who reported that the good work in the interior of the building had been designed by Mr. Casey, and his name ought to be placed on the tablet as the architect to complete the work."

Yours, truly,

ALFRED STONE,

Secretary American Institute of Architects.

MR. EDWARD PEARCE CASEY.

THE ARCHITECTURAL LEAGUE OF NEW YORK,

New York, May 27, 1896.

DEAR SIR: At the last meeting of the executive committee of the Architectural League, held May 21, 1896, the committee concerning you made their report, which was approved by the executive committee, and the secretary was instructed to forward you the action of the society and a copy of said report as appended hereto.

Yours, truly,

GEO. KEISTER, *Secretary.*

MR. EDWARD PEARCE CASEY,
171 Broadway, City.

To the Executive Committee of the Architectural League of New York.

GENTLEMEN: The committee appointed by the President to hear the case of Mr. Edward Pearce Casey, in connection with the dissatisfaction expressed by Messrs. Smithmeyer and Pelz at recent publications bearing upon the Congressional Library at Washington, beg to report, that, having heard Mr. Casey's side of this matter, they are convinced that the misstatements which appeared in Harper's Weekly and in other papers of recent date, were an unfortunate result of carelessness on the part of the publications concerned.

Mr. Casey informs us that on having the facts drawn to his attention, he wrote to Harper's Weekly requesting them to rectify the error of attributing the entire design of the Library to him in the general title of the cut of the exterior; the statements in the text of the article seem to have been substantially correct, and there is no doubt in our minds that great credit is due to Mr. Casey for a very considerable portion of the interior design of the building as it exists to-day, and to even a greater degree in the building as it will appear when the work now under contract has been completed and put in place.

Mr. Casey informs us, and we believe his statement to be correct in every particular, that since the discharge of Mr. Pelz he has been employed as architect to prepare for and supervise the execution of a very considerable quantity of work upon the Library, and that in this way he has executed nearly one hundred and forty full-size drawings besides numerous large-scaled details, etc.

Your committee believe, therefore, that in this matter large credit is due to Mr. Casey as one of the architects of the Congressional Library, and that it would be not only highly fitting but merely just that his name should appear upon the tablet which bears the names of the architects of the building.

Respectfully submitted.

BRUCE PRICE,
JOHN GALEN HOWARD,
Committee.

APRIL 23, 1896.

The following is a copy of the letter received from Mr. Bruce Price by John Galen Howard, with the report of the committee, as he had returned the same to him:

NEW YORK, *May 8, 1896.*

DEAR MR. HOWARD: I return your report in regard to Mr. Casey, signed. I went all over the matter with Mr. Green, and I have been over it a number of times with Smithmeyer, and I think I fully understand it.

I find that there is no disposition on the part of the Library people to do either of the parties to the contention injustice. Casey is a young man, and to the profession his ability is thoroughly well known. We know his splendid quality in detail; consequently it is only a matter of an opportunity with him when his name will come to the front as an architect and the public will know it, so therefore about his share in the work, I do not feel that any injustice can be done him; but with the other man (Smithmeyer), whose course is almost run, and who has struggled upon this thing for years and years, we can appreciate his feelings and we do not want in any way to trench in any degree upon what reputation he may get out of it.

The fact is that he collated all the data and compiled it into the present plan, and in this scientific side of the question his work has unquestionably been very good. The general scheme of his elevations remains intact; * * * so that, expressing the views of the situation, which I have been wanting to do and have now done very crudely, I think I can sign your report exactly as it is, as it does cover the ground.

Most truly, yours,

BRUCE PRICE.

In letters to the Washington Times of January 13, 1895, and the American Architect and Building News of June 29, 1895, respectively, Mr. Pelz claims to be himself practically the sole author of the original designs for the Library building. He has so claimed to me verbally many times, and my observations for several years lead to the belief that his claim may be correct.

The portion of honor and credit due to Mr. Smithmeyer for the production of the Library building as it stands to-day is limited, a larger part is due to Mr. Pelz, while the strictly architectural work of Mr. Casey has been so important that, coming last, he has lifted the structure to such an eminence in the artistic architecture of this country that his professional predecessors on the building should welcome the greater credit thus incidentally secured, and be content that their names as architects precede his by the chronological order of the tablet.

Referring now to the remarks of Senator Vest in the Senate on the 3d instant, I have to say that he was grossly misinformed. In the lecture to which he refers I made no allusion whatsoever, directly or indirectly, to the subject of authorship of the plans of the Library building, nor as to the way in which the plans were obtained. The

only allusion made to an architect at all was in these words, when explaining how the decorative painting had been managed: "The main designs were made by the architect, Mr. Casey, and worked up under his direction by Mr. Garnsey, the chief of the decorators." I have never claimed to be the author of the architectural plans myself, not even in connection with General Casey. On the contrary, I have invariably denied remarks to this effect made by misinformed persons, and have always given Messrs. Smithmeyer and Pelz their full due in every respect.

Their charge that there has ever been even the slightest attempt by those controlling the work since their time to belittle and take from them their rights as architects of the building is wholly unfounded. On the contrary, they have at all times received much kinder and more courteous treatment from the heads of this office than they have chosen to reciprocate.

It is very distasteful to me to have to make these statements, but the persistent and unwarranted attacks upon me seem to make forbearance no longer a virtue, while the statements are also called forth by your particular request for the facts.

BERNARD R. GREEN.

C.

Statement of services rendered by Edward Pearce Casey upon the new building for Library of Congress as architect from November, 1892, until March, 1897.

When, in the fall of 1892, it devolved upon me to make architectural designs for the completion of the Library building, this structure was at that time in a most incomplete condition. The exterior walls had not reached the main cornice, and the ironwork of the great dome had not fully been completed.

The granite of the exterior was, however, all under contract, and had for the most part been designed, but not as yet entirely prepared.

The cast-iron window and door trims for many parts of the interior had been contracted for, and much of this work was already in place.

The marble work of the rotunda and of the corridors, as well as the greater part of that for the main stair hall, was under contract and was being prepared.

The working drawings for the completion of the building in other respects had not been prepared or even for the most part conceived, and such conceptions as had been placed upon paper it was decided not to make use of.

The building, in appearance, was a hollow brick shell, with the exterior granite work well along toward completion. All that was visible upon the interior was brickwork in the floors, walls, and ceilings of the basement and first story and central dome. Here and there a cornice

was indicated in the brickwork, but it was frequently found necessary to alter its position or proportion.

Such was the picture presented at that time, and with the building at this stage of construction as a basis I was directed to make all the architectural designs necessary for its completion.

The problems presented were purely architectural and were such as an architect only could solve.

I went about the work independent of other architects, but under the conditions and restrictions indicated above, not under the direction of the former architects nor to carry out their designs or ideas after the manner of a chief draftsman, but purely and simply as another architect, called in to complete the architectural work upon the building and to change in certain ways the architectural character of the work which was about to go on at that time, mainly upon the interior of the structure.

Far from aid being given by what had been done, there was often considerable difficulty presented on account of eccentricities in the plan and inappropriate motives in the architecture which had to remain and be incorporated in the new designs in a way that would tend to make the whole presentable. In a building of this character and extent, moreover, the sculptures and paintings, general decoration in relief and color, mosaic and tile work on floors and vaults, not to mention other purely decorative features, being as much an integral part of the structure as are the capitals of the columns and as necessary to its proper composition, it was made my duty to design or direct these decorations in order to preserve the proper harmony as a whole throughout the building.

It is difficult to say wherein my employment as architect influenced the character of the building for better or for worse, for innumerable little changes were made here and there which may have given a stamp, be it bad or good. Nevertheless, some of the principal changes in design may be mentioned, as follows:

In the large central rotunda a design for its completion was required. It existed simply as a large rough-brick interior formed by eight large piers surmounted by arches carrying the smooth shell of the dome in iron and terra cotta. The marble work extending to the balustrade of the gallery was designed and under contract. With this much as a foundation, all the architectural features and motives of this interior above the level of the gallery balustrade were designed and proportioned by me, with the exception of a little ironwork in the lantern of the dome. This included the capitals of the large columns, the entire upper and lower entablatures, the archivolts and soffits of the arches, the ribs and systems of coffering of the dome and large arches, with the distribution of ornament and sculpture over all. Changes in the marble work which had already been designed and was under contract were made by me in altering the profiles of the eight large columns; in raising the crown of the center arch of the first tier of the marble

screens between the piers (this was by the drawings 2 feet lower than the flanking arches); in filling up the lower portion of these flanking arches to give the openings a better proportion, and in placing pedestals along the gallery balustrade, surmounted by bronze statues. The design for the ironwork and glass for the windows was also by me.

In the main entrance hall the marble work, up to the level of and including the entablatures of the second-story columns, had been designed, with the exception of the upper part of the two ends of the north and south corridors of the first story, as well as the corbels and the archivolt of arch near the octagon gallery entrances, and was under contract.

It was required of me to complete the design of the marble work above the entablatures of the second-story columns, design the archivolts and soffits of the arches, the spandril cartouches, etc., and to design the beamed ceiling and cove, together with the sculpture and glass work in the skylights; also to finish the design of the marble work left incomplete as aforesaid on the first and second floors, place the arches and consoles on the basement stairs, decrease the wide spacing in the balustrades, change the paneling on several arch soffits of first story, make designs and supervise the modeling of the marble capitals of the pilasters throughout this hall, as well as most of the other ornament and sculpture visible on all hands; in the second-story corridors of this hall to determine the form of the vaults and penetrations and devise and design the system of color decoration for the same, as well as the stucco ornamentation of the surrounding walls.

In the vestibule corridor the entire design above the marble archivolts and cornice, including the beamed ceiling, consoles, spandrils, etc., is by me.

The same is true as to the design for the mosaic decorations of the vaults of the first-story corridors of this entrance hall.

Moreover, the mosaic and tile floors of both stories were designed by me.

In the north and south curtain corridors of the first story the iron door and window trims had been put in place, and the marble work extending to the spring of the arches was completed according to previous designs.

The form of the domes covering these corridors was entirely changed by me, and all the architectural members, including archivolts, coffers, cornices, paneling, and the ornamentation of same, was designed by me.

The same is true of the mosaic floors of these corridors.

In the vestibule communicating with the Senate reading room there was an awkward scheme of vaulting and badly intersecting arches in brick with openings very unsymmetrically disposed. The whole design was changed by me by substituting a heavily molded flat ceiling and rearranging the openings somewhat, also by covering the walls with a system of marble paneling and substituting marble architraves and cornices for the iron ones in place about the openings.

In both the House and Senate reading rooms there had been nothing accomplished.

The entire design of these rooms was by me and the intended ceiling showing flat domes and arches supported by beams was replaced by flat surfaces.

The two corresponding rooms opening off the north curtain corridor much plainer in character, were finished under my supervision as architect, only the iron trims being in place about the windows and doors.

In the Librarian's office nothing had been done, merely the red brick walls and vaults being visible.

The design for the completion of this entire interior is by me.

The walls of the second story not being at that time completed, there was entire freedom to change the contemplated forms of the ceiling and this entire floor.

In the four corner pavilion rooms of this story there were scarcely anything indicated beyond openings for doors and windows. The domes of these rooms, with their different systems of coffering pendentives, archivolts, entablatures, and pilasters, together with the sculpture and ornament embellishing the same, were designed by me. The same is true of the design of the mosaic floors.

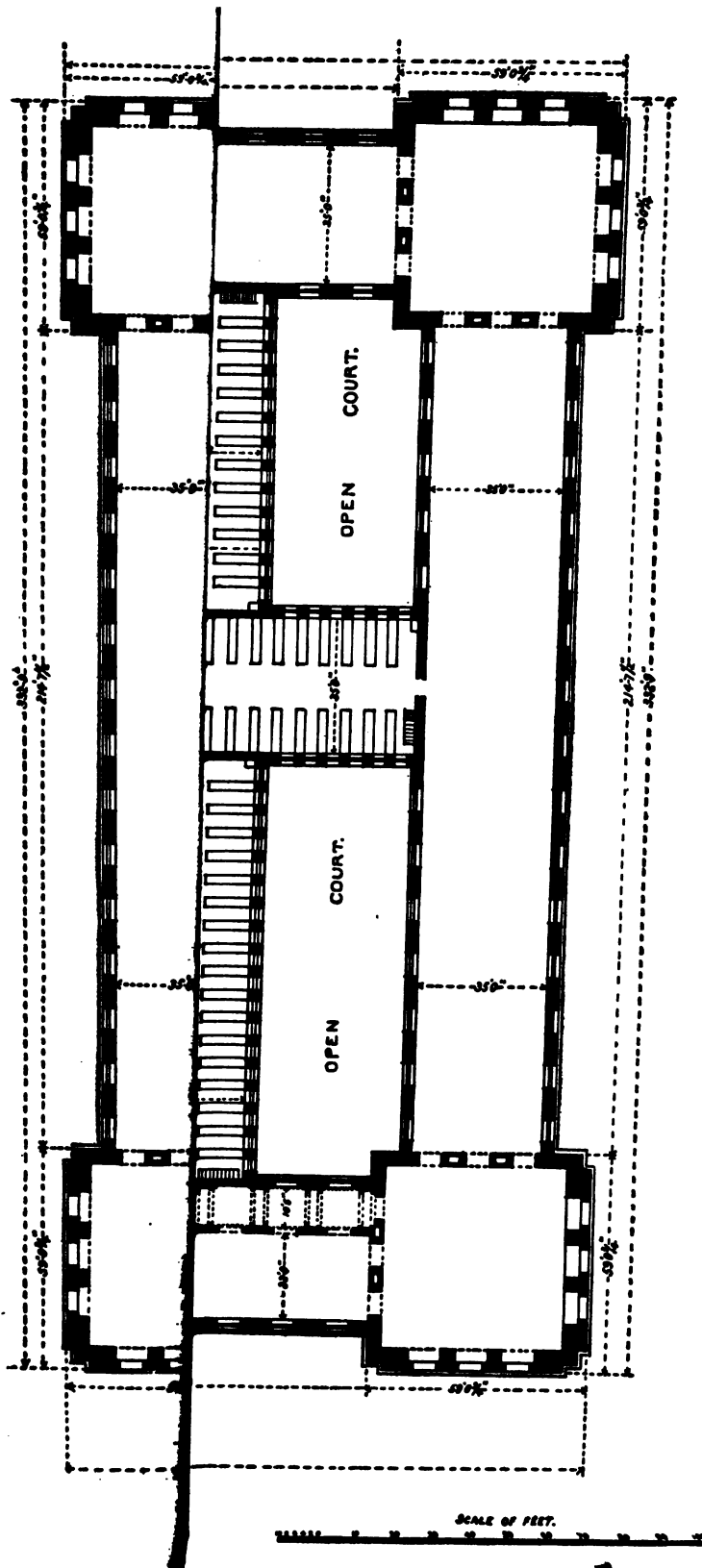
In the curtain halls of this story the iron trims of windows and doors had been previously designed and cast and were put in place, but it is all there was toward the completion of these halls. The barrel vault of the west curtains, with their systems of ribs and coffers, together with the supporting pilasters and entablatures, are after my design.

The plainer curtain halls of this story are also finished after my design or supervision as architect.

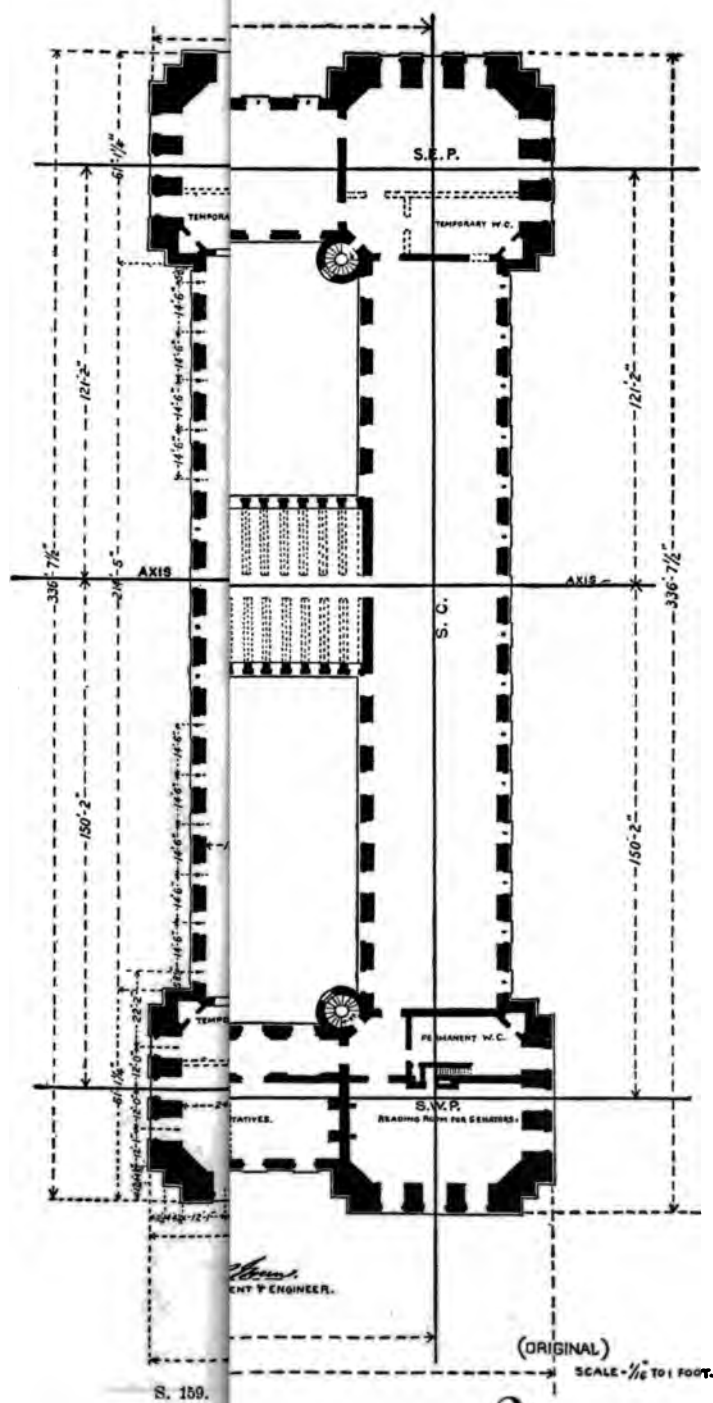
This list touches upon all the important divisions of the interior, my work extends in more or less degree into nearly every other part in various ways and is visible in the ornamental bronze and wrought iron work, tile work, mosaic work, color decoration, etc., and also in the general supervision of all paintings and sculpture.

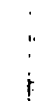
Upon the exterior the changes were of minor importance and included the substitution of cartouches at the corners of the four corner pavilions in place of a continuation of the small-pilaster motif, the general design and proportioning of the busts and their supporting pedestals in the circular openings of the main pavilion, also of the stones and spandril sculpture of the main entrance, plaques at the four corners of entrance porch, and general design of the three sets of bronze doors together with the plan for the laying out of the grounds about the building, including the stone exedras, bronze lamp posts, stone pedestals of approaches, embellishment of fountain, etc.

EDWARD P. CASE











*Smithsonian Institution
Washington, D.C.
June 1892*

DESIGN OF THE
CONGRESSIONAL LIBRARY BUILDING



BUILDING FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.
FOR THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

4

GENERAL DRAWING.
452

